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AUTHORITY
MARVEL COMICS
PRESENTS
WOLVERINE
FEATURING
THE
MAN-THING
AND MORE!

MARVEL® COMICS PRESENTS™

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"THE FIGHT"—PART 8 OF 10
Roche has captured the saloon-keeper, O'Donnell—in the mistaken belief that he is his arch-rival, the Tiger—and means to execute him (after appropriate hideous tortures, designed to teach him the utter, absolute folly of challenging Roche). But the REAL Tiger—Jessan Hoan—and Wolverine have no intention of letting their friend die.

"PRISONERS"—PART 8 OF 12
The Congressional testimony of Colonel Jody Choate has left the nation spellbound. But reporter Mickey Ditillio has penetrated almost to the core of Choate's covert operations—and discovered its links to drug smuggling, satanism, and political scandal.

"KILLS"—PART 8 OF 8
Tracking a shipment of arms to a small island off the coast of Sardinia, Shang-Chi and Shen Kui slip off to infiltrate the terrorist base alone—forcing Tarr and Reston to follow in a helicopter. During a chaotic firefight, the chopper is downed and Shang-Chi is separated from Shen Ki". Finally facing Argus himself (the leader of the terrorist alliance) inside the base complex, Shang-Chi receives the shock of his life...

The world knows Tony Stark as a millionaire industrialist and brilliant inventor. But there are other sides to Tony Stark as well. He's a recovering alcoholic—and the invincible Iron Man!

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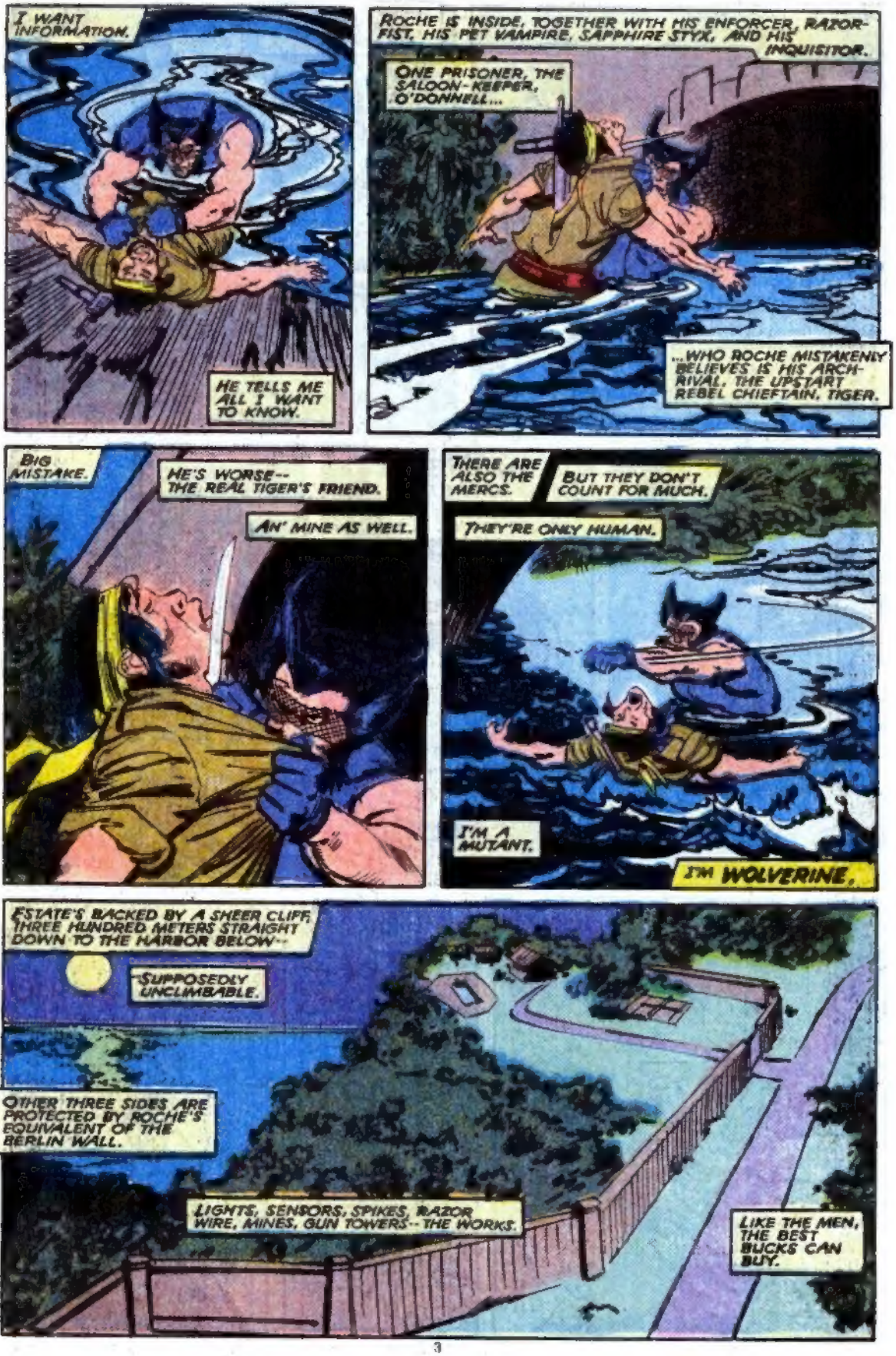
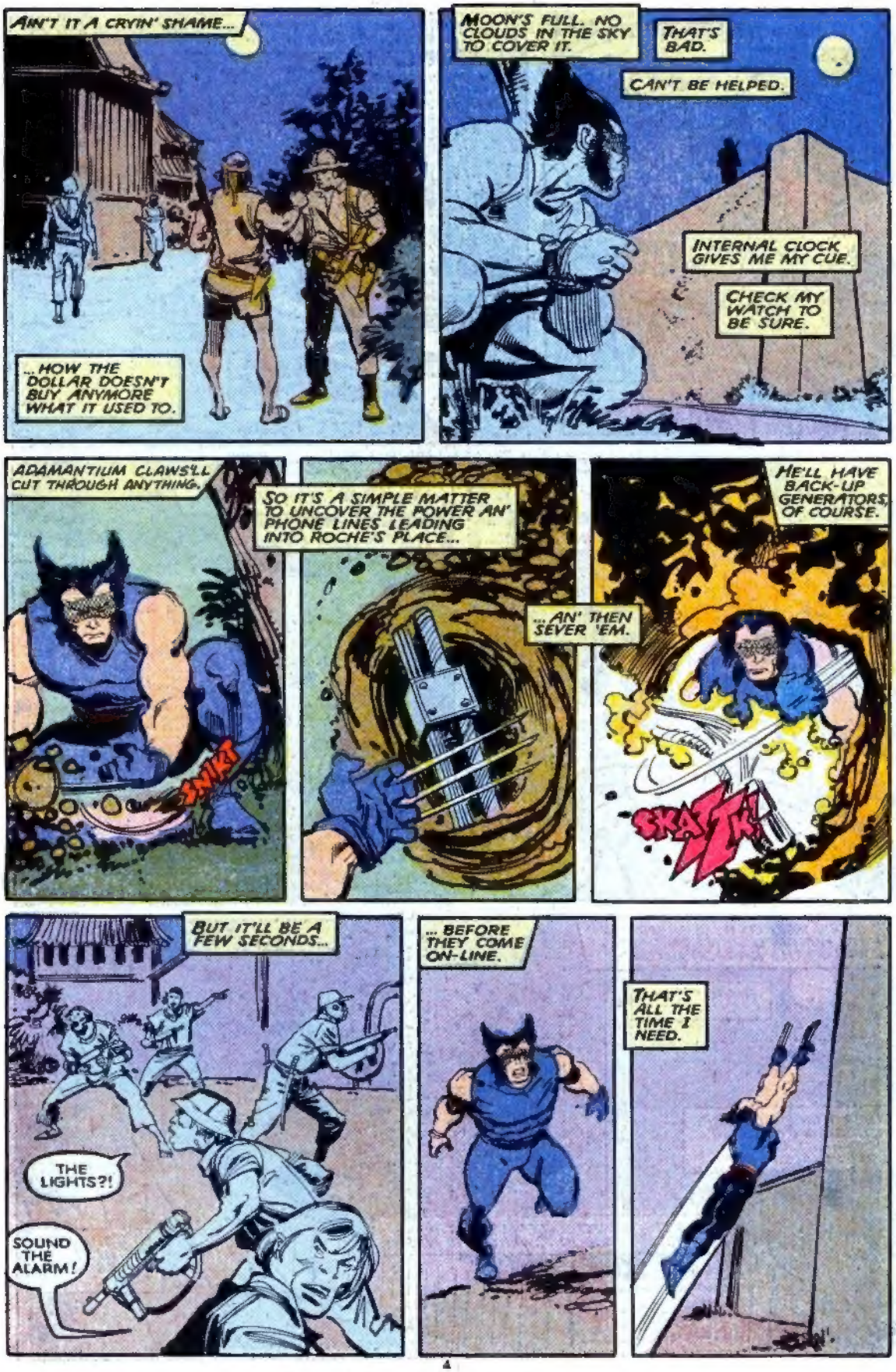
ROCHE'S ESTATE...
...HOME FIT FOR A CRIME-LORD, AS MUCH FORTRESS AS PALACE...
...ON THE HEIGHTS OVERLOOKING THE CITY OF MADRIPOOR...
...COMPLETE WITH AN ARMY TO DEFEND IT.
WELL?
DEBRIS IS BLOCKING THE ENTRANCE.
STREAM'S OVER-FLOWING ITS BANKS.
SO CLEAR IT.
HOW ABOUT SOME HELP?
YOU'RE NEW BOY IN THE SQUAD, CHEN.
THAT MEANS YOU DO ALL THE SCUT-WORK.
SING OUT IF THERE'S A PROBLEM.
WE'LL BE IN EARSHOT.
BETTER YOU SHOULD BE IN HADES, RUNNING DOG, ELITIST PIGS!
JUST 'CAUSE THEY'VE GOT MORE TIME ON THE JOB...
...THEY THINK THEY CAN LORD IT OVER ME!
SOMEDAY, THOUGH, I'LL MAKE 'EM PAY--!
HOW ABOUT NOW, BUB?!
THWUD

SAVE the TIGER
STARRING
WOLVERINE
THE FIGHT!
YOUR CHOICE, BOY, YOU WANT TO BE A HERO--
--D'YOU WANT TO DIE?!
HE'S SMARTER THAN HE LOOKS.
THE SOUL OF COOPERATION.


I WANT INFORMATION.
HE TELLS ME ALL I WANT TO KNOW.
ROCHE IS INSIDE, TOGETHER WITH HIS ENFORCER, RAZOR-FIST, HIS PET VAMPIRE, SAPPHIRE STYX, AND HIS INQUISITOR.
ONE PRISONER, THE SALOON-KEEPER, O'DONNELL...
...WHO ROCHE MISTAKENLY BELIEVES IS HIS ARCH-RIVAL, THE UPSTART REBEL CHIEFTAIN, TIGER.
BIG MISTAKE.
HE'S WORSE-- THE REAL TIGER'S FRIEND.
AN' MINE AS WELL.
THERE ARE ALSO THE MERCS.
BUT THEY DON'T COUNT FOR MUCH.
THEY'RE ONLY HUMAN.
I'M A MUTANT.
I'M WOLVERINE.
ESTATE'S BACKED BY A SHEER CLIFF, THREE HUNDRED METERS STRAIGHT DOWN TO THE HARBOR BELOW--
-SUPPOSEDLY UNCLIMBABLE.
OTHER THREE SIDES ARE PROTECTED BY ROCHE'S EQUIVALENT OF THE BERLIN WALL.
LIGHTS, SENSORS, SPIKES, RAZOR WIRE, MINES, GUN TOWERS-- THE WORKS.
LIKE THE MEN, THE BEST BUCKS CAN BUY.

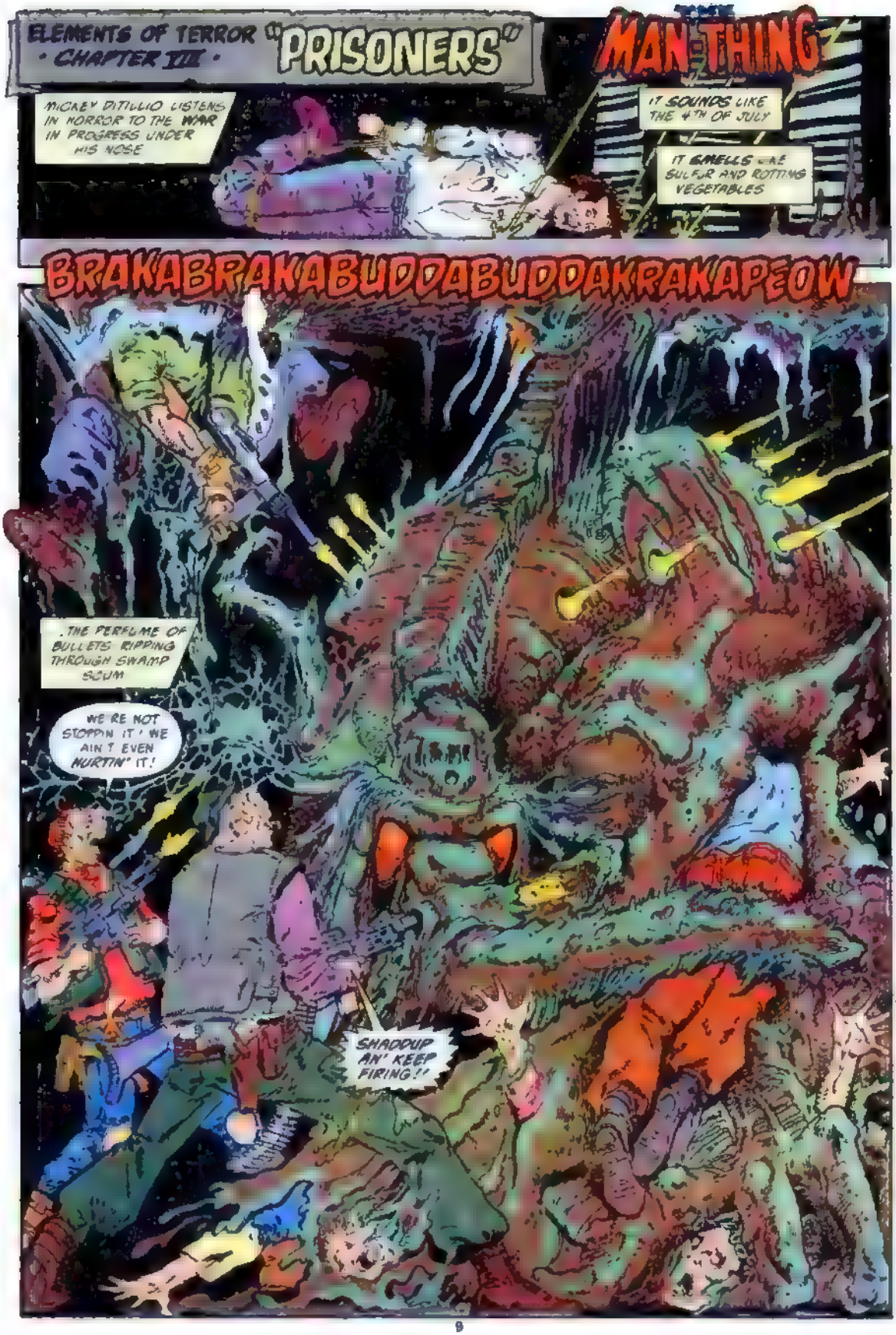

AIN'T IT A CRYIN' SHAME...
...HOW THE DOLLAR DOESN'T BUY ANYMORE WHAT IT USED TO.
MOON'S FULL. NO CLOUDS IN THE SKY TO COVER IT.
THAT'S BAD.
CAN'T BE HELPED.
INTERNAL CLOCK GIVES ME MY CUE.
CHECK MY WATCH TO BE SURE.
ADAMANTIUM CLAWS'LL CUT THROUGH ANYTHING.
SNIK!
SO IT'S A SIMPLE MATTER TO UNCOVER THE POWER AN' PHONE LINES LEADING INTO ROCHE'S PLACE...
...AN' THEN SEVER 'EM.
HE'LL HAVE BACK-UP GENERATORS, OF COURSE.
SKAZZK!
BUT IT'LL BE A FEW SECONDS...
THE LIGHTS?!
SOUND THE ALARM!
... BEFORE THEY COME ON-LINE.
THAT'S ALL THE TIME I NEED.

AND WHILE I SLIP IN...
...THE FRONT DOOR...
...MY PARTNER SNEAKS IN THE BACK.
JESSÁN HOAN.
NO MORE THE BANKER--- THAT WOMAN AN' LIFE ARE HISTORY---
--SHE CALLS HERSELF TIGER NOW.
SHE WANTS ROCHE'S THRONE, HIS POWER...
...HIS HEAD.
GOT NO QUARREL WITH THAT.
IT'S WHAT HAPPENS AFTER--WHEN SHE TAKES HIS PLACE--THAT'S THE PROBLEM.
HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO DEAL WITH A CRIMELORD...
...I'M PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING?
GETTIN' WAY AHEAD O' MYSELF. THIS IS NOWHERE NEAR A DONE DEAL. THERE'S PLENTY CAN STILL GO WRONG.
SILENCE, FOOLS!
YOU'RE RUNNING ABOUT LIKE A PACK OF WITLESS CURS!
GET AHOLD OF YOURSELVES!
ACTIVATE THE EMERGENCY GENERATORS.
USE INFRARED AND STARLIGHT 'SCOPES TO COVER THE GROUNDS.
FORM UP YOUR FIRE TEAMS, AND SECURE THE PERIMETER.
AT ONCE, Mr. ROCHE!

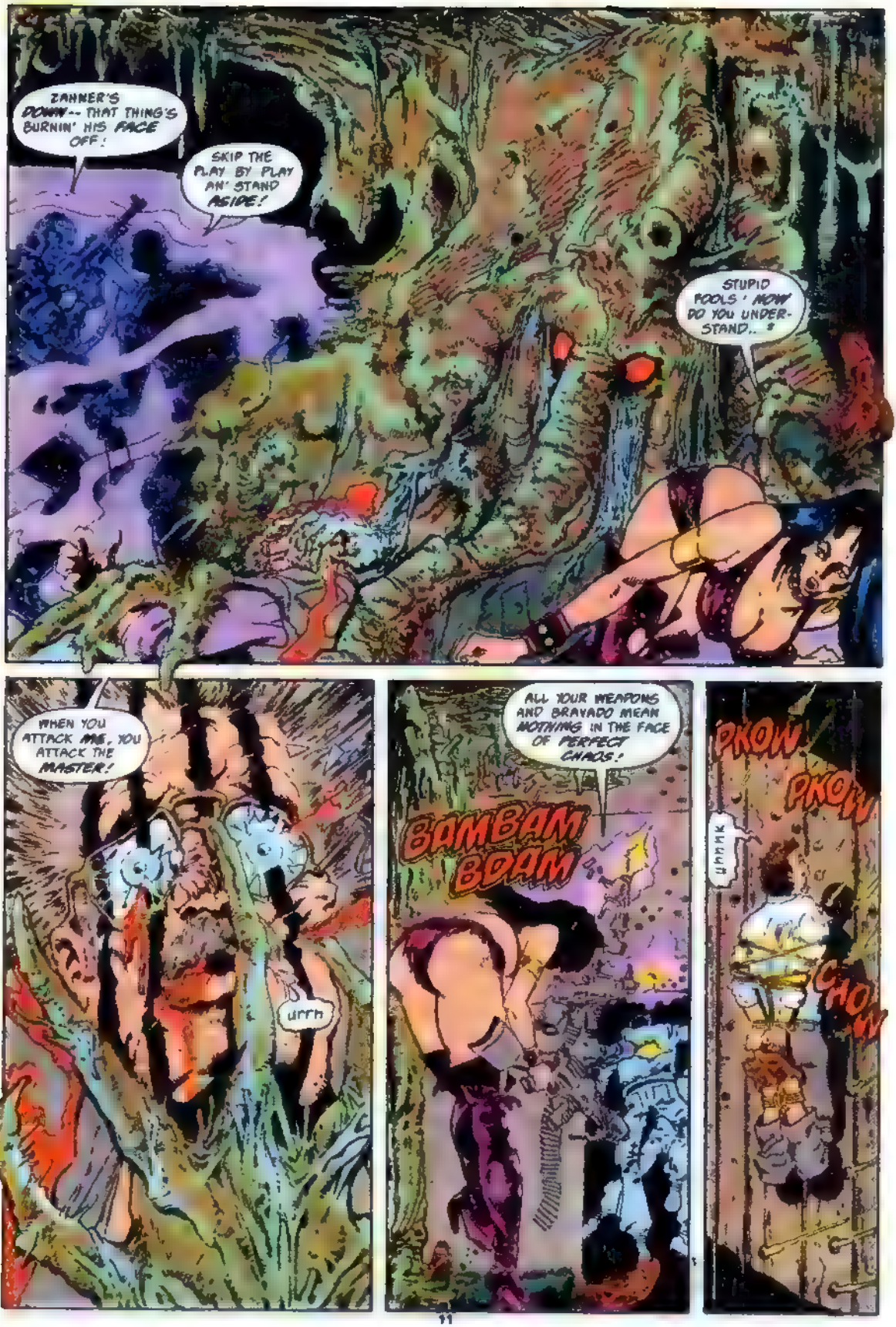
ANY INTRUDERS ARE TO BE SHOT ON SIGHT.
UNLEASH THE DOGS TO FLUSH THEM OUT INTO THE OPEN.
YESSIR.
SAPPHIRE, I LEAVE OUR "GUEST" TO YOUR TENDER MERCIES.
ROCHE, YOU DO KNOW THE WAY TO WIN A GIRL'S HEART.
EASILY, MY DEAR--WHEN SHE'S AS INSATIABLE AS YOU.
RAZORFIST, YOU STAY BY ME.
IF THIS IS A RESCUE ATTEMPT, THOSE MISGUIDED CRETINS WILL GAIN NAUGHT...
"... BUT THEIR OWN DEATHS."
DOBERMANS.
SCENT GIVES 'EM AWAY.
I TWIST UPWIND, TO GIVE 'EM A BREATH O' MINE--
THEIR LARYNXES REMOVED SO THEY CAN'T WARN THEIR PREY BY BARKING.
-- PLUS A GROWL TO LET 'EM KNOW WHO'S BOSS.
GRRRR
DOGS'RE SMARTER IN SOME WAYS THAN PEOPLE.
THEY KNOW WHEN THEY'RE OUTMATCHED.
BUT THE NOISE I HAD TO MAKE DRAWS A LIGHT--
AND FIRE.
I'M NOT ABOUT TO PUSH MY LUCK.
A WELL-THROWN ROCK MAKES IT DARK AGAIN.
BUT NOW THE BULLY-BOYS KNOW WHERE TO SHOOT.

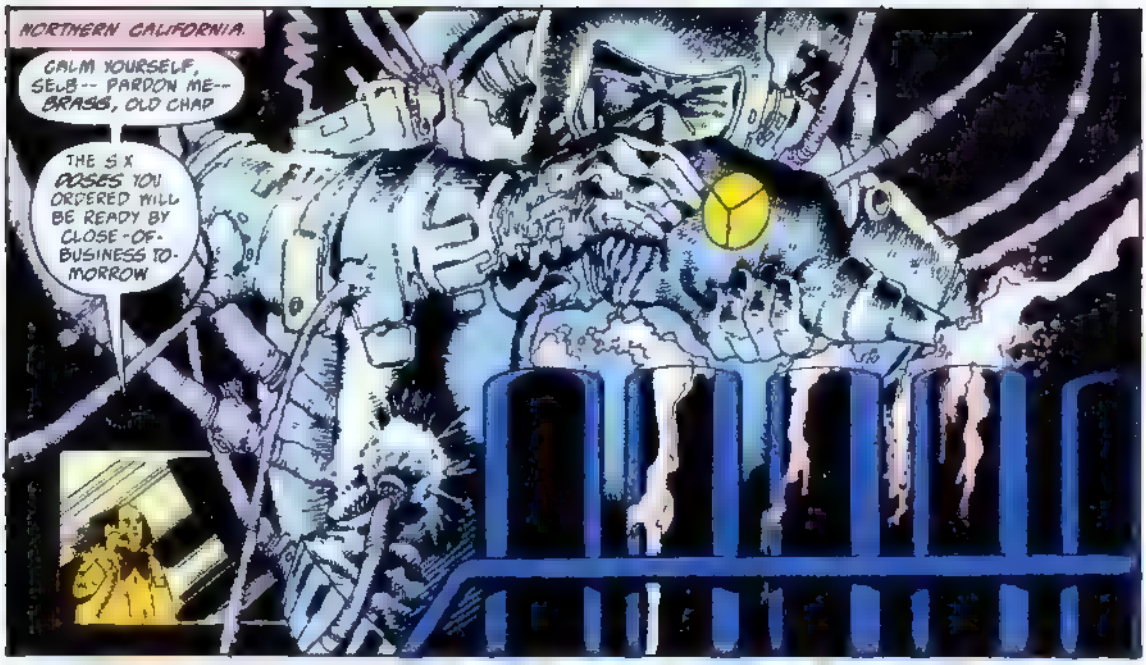
SO I HOTFOOT IT...
...SOMEWHERE ELSE.
CRASH!
AT FIRST GLANCE, NOT THE MOST BRILLIANT OF MOVES.
THE INTRUDER-- HE'S HERE!
GUN HIM!!
SUITS ME JUST FINE.
I GOT THESE CHUMPS RIGHT WHERE I WANT 'EM.
EVERYBODY'S AFTER WOLVERINE, JUST AS WE PLANNED.
LEAVING THE COAST CLEAR FOR ME...
...TO BACKTRACK ALONG THE ROUTE...
...HE SAID HE TOOK...
...OUT OF ROCHE'S DUNGEON.
"REVERED ANCESTORS, PLEASE LET ME BE IN TIME!"
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, SWEETS!
FIGHT AS HARD AS YOU CAN!
IT MAKES THE LIFE I DRAIN FROM YOU...
...SO MUCH MORE TASTY!
SKBOOM!

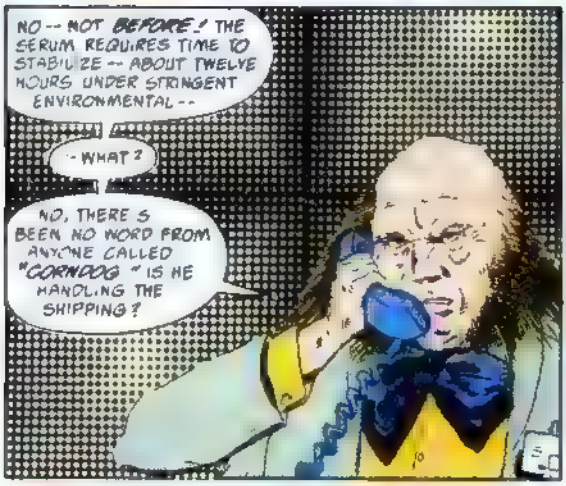
GET AWAY FROM HIM, YOU WITCH!
YAI EEE!
BRRRAM
T-TIGER
IT'S NO LESS, DEAR FRIEND...
..THAN YOU'D HAVE DONE FOR--
MY GUN?!!
SNAP!
WELL WELL WELL...
ISN'T THIS A DELIGHTFUL TURNABOUT?
GRAGRGH!
COULD IT BE WE WERE ABOUT TO EXECUTE THE WRONG TIGER?
Tsk tsk tsk-- CAN'T HAVE THAT NOW, CAN WE?
OPEN YOUR EYES, LITTLE ONE--
--TAKE A GOOD, LONG LOOK...
AT THE LAST THING YOU'LL EVER SEE!
ROCHE WAS GYPPED.
THIS BUNCH WAS STRICTLY AMATEUR-HOUR.
NEXT ROUND, I KNOW, WON'T BE SO EASY.
I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU SURVIVED OUR EARLIER ENCOUNTER, STRANGER.
FATES WILLING, WE SHALL NOT MEET AGAIN.
FAIR WARNING, RAZOR-FIST. STAND ASIDE WHILE YOU'VE THE CHANCE
AND BETRAY MY BOND?
THAT, I CANNOT DO.
THE ONLY WAY TO GET TO ROCHE, WARRIOR...
...IS OVER MY DEAD BODY.
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

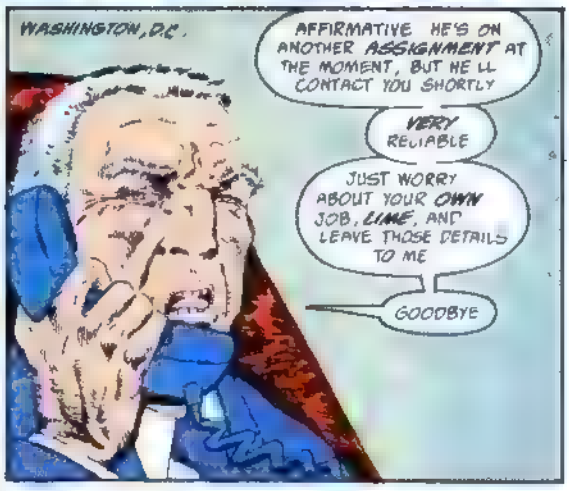

ELEMENTS OF TERROR
· CHAPTER III ·
"PRISONERS"
MAN-THING
MICKEY DITILLIO LISTENS IN HORROR TO THE WAR IN PROGRESS UNDER HIS NOSE
IT SOUNDS LIKE THE 4TH OF JULY
IT SMELLS LIKE SULFUR AND ROTTING VEGETABLES
BRAKABRAKABUDDABUDDAKRAKAPEOW
THE PERFUME OF BULLETS RIPPING THROUGH SWAMP SCUM
WE'RE NOT STOPPIN IT ' WE AIN'T EVEN HURTIN' IT!
SHADDUP AN' KEEP FIRING!!

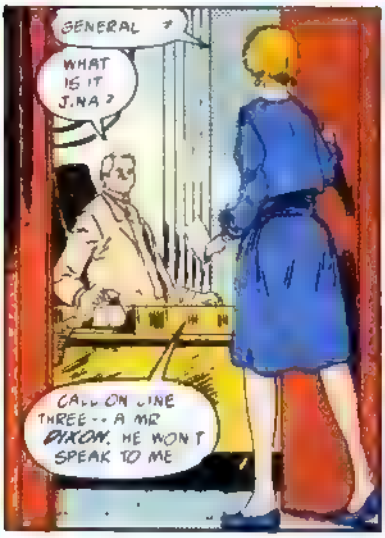
KEEP FIRING, ZAHNER!
I AIN'T GONNA DIE TO PROVE THAT THING CAN'T BE KILLED!
MAKE SURE YOU MEAN IT, WILKERSON
GRRED
YOU QUIT ME--
YOU QUIT FOR GOOD.
UH
LIVE LIKE A COWARD, DIE LIKE ONE
WAY O' THE WORLD
AND AS FOR THAT WALKIN' WAD O --
fnnngh
HSSSSSSS


ZAHNER'S DOWN-- THAT THING'S BURNIN' HIS FACE OFF!
SKIP THE PLAY BY PLAY AN' STAND ASIDE!
STUPID FOOLS! NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND..?
WHEN YOU ATTACK ME, YOU ATTACK THE MASTER!
urrh
ALL YOUR WEAPONS AND BRAVADO MEAN NOTHING IN THE FACE OF PERFECT CHAOS!
BAMBAM BDAM
PKOW
PKOW
unnnk
CHOW


NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.
CALM YOURSELF, SELB -- PARDON ME -- BRASS, OLD CHAP
THE SIX POSES YOU ORDERED WILL BE READY BY CLOSE-OF-BUSINESS TOMORROW


NO -- NOT BEFORE! THE SERUM REQUIRES TIME TO STABILIZE -- ABOUT TWELVE HOURS UNDER STRINGENT ENVIRONMENTAL --
- WHAT?
NO, THERE'S BEEN NO WORD FROM ANYONE CALLED "CORNDOG" - IS HE HANDLING THE SHIPPING?


WASHINGTON, D.C.
AFFIRMATIVE. HE'S ON ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT AT THE MOMENT, BUT HE'LL CONTACT YOU SHORTLY
VERY RELIABLE
JUST WORRY ABOUT YOUR OWN JOB, LIME, AND LEAVE THOSE DETAILS TO ME
GOODBYE


GENERAL?
WHAT IS IT J.NA?
CALL ON LINE THREE -- A MR DIXON. HE WON'T SPEAK TO ME

IT'S ALL RIGHT I'LL TAKE IT
SELBERT

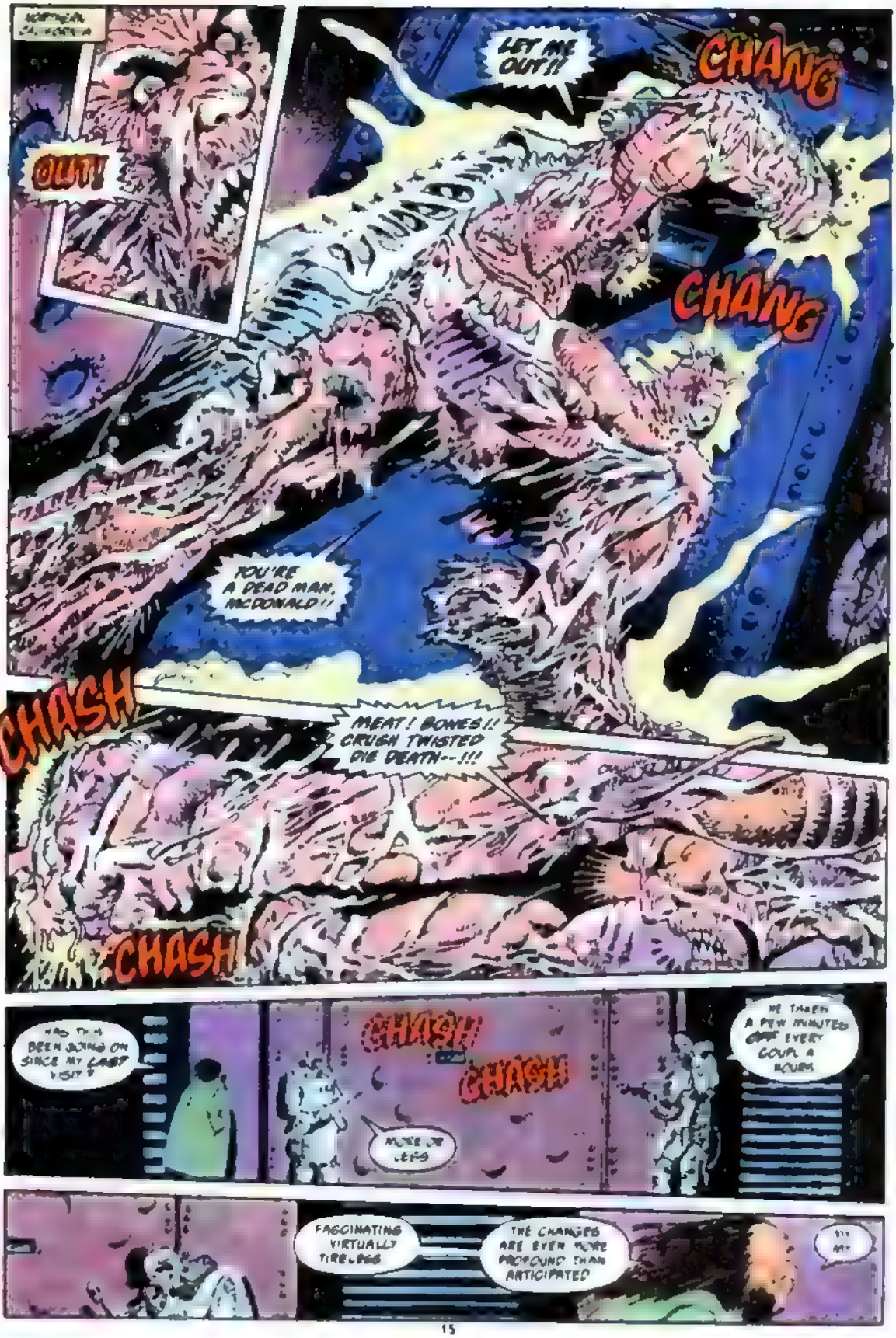
-- YEAH HI. CORNDOG GAVE ME THIS NUMBER TO CALL IN CASE SOMETHIN WENT WRONG.
WELL SOMETHIN DID...

"WE THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TESTIMONY, COLONEL CHOATE."
IT WAS ELOQUENT... IF NOT QUITE AS FORTHCOMING AS WE MIGHT HAVE HOPED
THANK YOU, SENATOR
I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A CLOSING STATEMENT, IF I MAY
OF COURSE

SIR, JODY CHOATE HAS WORN THIS UNIFORM FOR ALMOST TWENTY YEARS -- AND HE'S PROUD OF THAT
HE'S DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO SERVING HIS COUNTRY -- AND HE'S EVEN PROUDER OF THAT.
NOW, I'VE BEEN ACCUSED OF BREAKING CERTAIN RULES HERE, CERTAIN LAWS . AND MAYBE I HAVE.
BUT IF SO, IT'S BECAUSE I SAW THIS COUNTRY -- AND THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS WHO DEPEND ON IT -- IN TROUBLE. AND I TRIED TO HELP.
WHEN I SERVED IN VIETNAM, WE DIDN'T STOP TO ASK IF IT WAS LEGAL TO PULL A BUDDY AWAY FROM AN EXPLODING MINE...
..OR TO RESCUE A CHILD FROM A BURNING HUT..
OR TO STICK A BAYONET INTO CHARLIE'S GUT
WE LEARNED INITIATIVE. WE LEARNED HOW TO SURVIVE AND HELP OUR FRIENDS SURVIVE AND THAT'S ALL I'VE DONE IN THIS MATTER
IF THAT'S ILLEGAL I'M GRATIFIED TO HAVE COMMITTED SUCH A PATRIOTIC OFFENSE

THE WITNESS IS EXCUSED
RAP
THIS COMMITTEE STANDS ADJOURNED UNTIL TWO P.M.

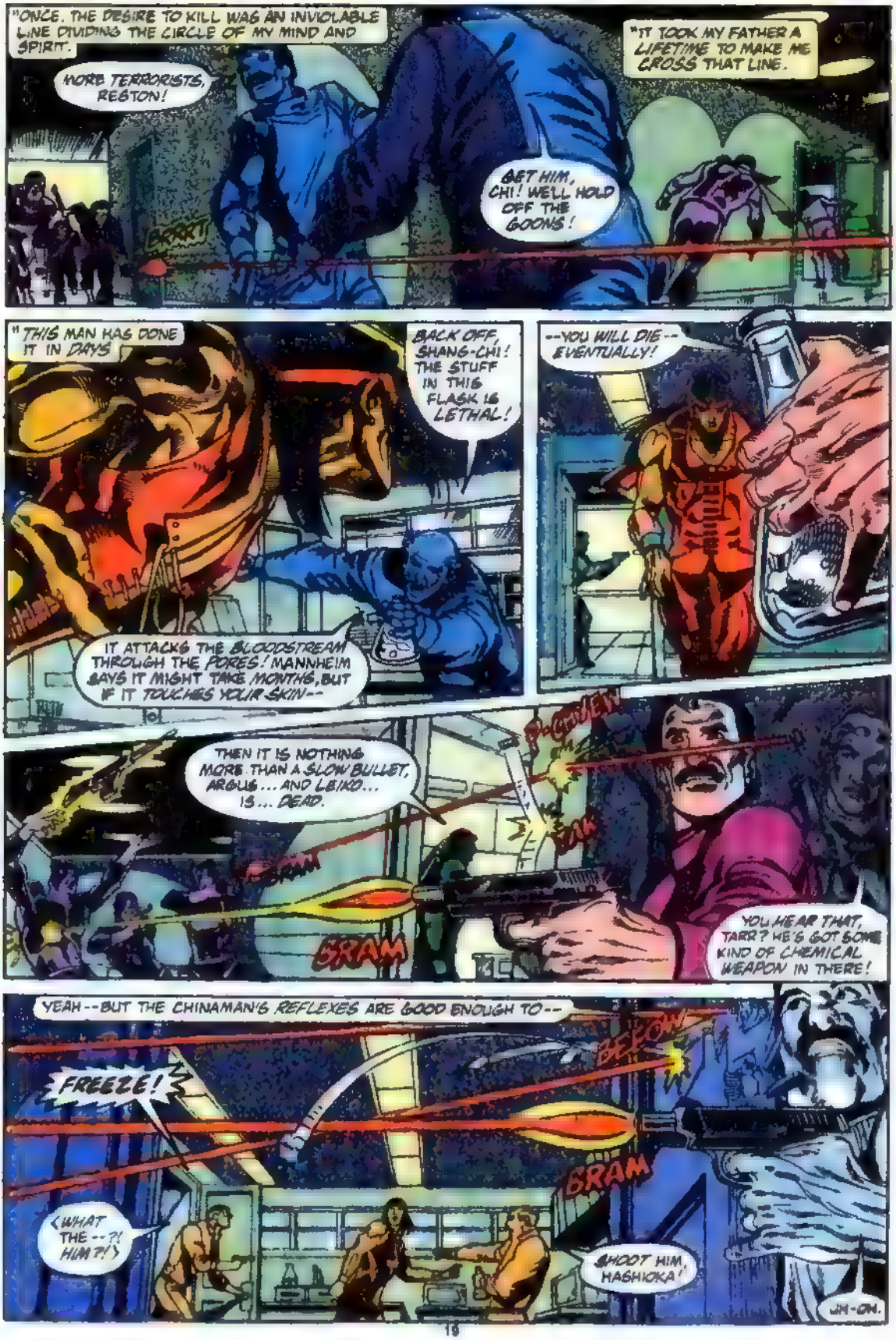
SUBURBAN MARYLAND, A SHORT TIME LATER...
DON'T ARGUE WITH ME, BRASS--!
IN LIGHT OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
YES, I'M SERIOUS!
I WANT DEMON'S DEN AND EVERYTHING IN IT REDUCED TO SCORCHED EARTH!
CAN THIS PIXON FLY A PLANE?
GOOD. HAVE HIM MAKE THE RUN TO THE AIRFIELD.
I'LL MEET HIM THERE
DON'T GIVE ME ADVICE! FORGET THE COMMITTEE!
TO YOU, THIS IS BUSINESS--TO ME, IT'S SOMETHING ELSE!
WHEN I COMMENCE AN OPERATION, I SEE IT THROUGH!
STEEL OUT!
WHERE ARE THE KIDS?
AT MY MOTHER'S I HEARD YOU SHOUTING IS ANYTHING WRONG?
I'M GOING AWAY
I COULD BE GONE FOR A LONG TIME, DEB
I MAY NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN
I, DEB, I NEED
I KNOW
ONE LAST KILL, DEB.
I NEED ONE LAST KILL
I KNOW, DARLING I KNOW


NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
OUT!
LET ME OUT!!
CHANG
CHANG
YOU'RE A DEAD MAN, McDONALD!!
CHASH
MEAT! BONES!! CRUSH TWISTED DIE DEATH--!!!
CHASH
HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON SINCE MY LAST VISIT?
CHASH
CHASH
MORE OR LESS
HE TAKES A FEW MINUTES OFF EVERY COUPLA HOURS
FASCINATING VIRTUALLY TIRELESS
THE CHANGES ARE EVEN MORE PROFOUND THAN ANTICIPATED
HM MM

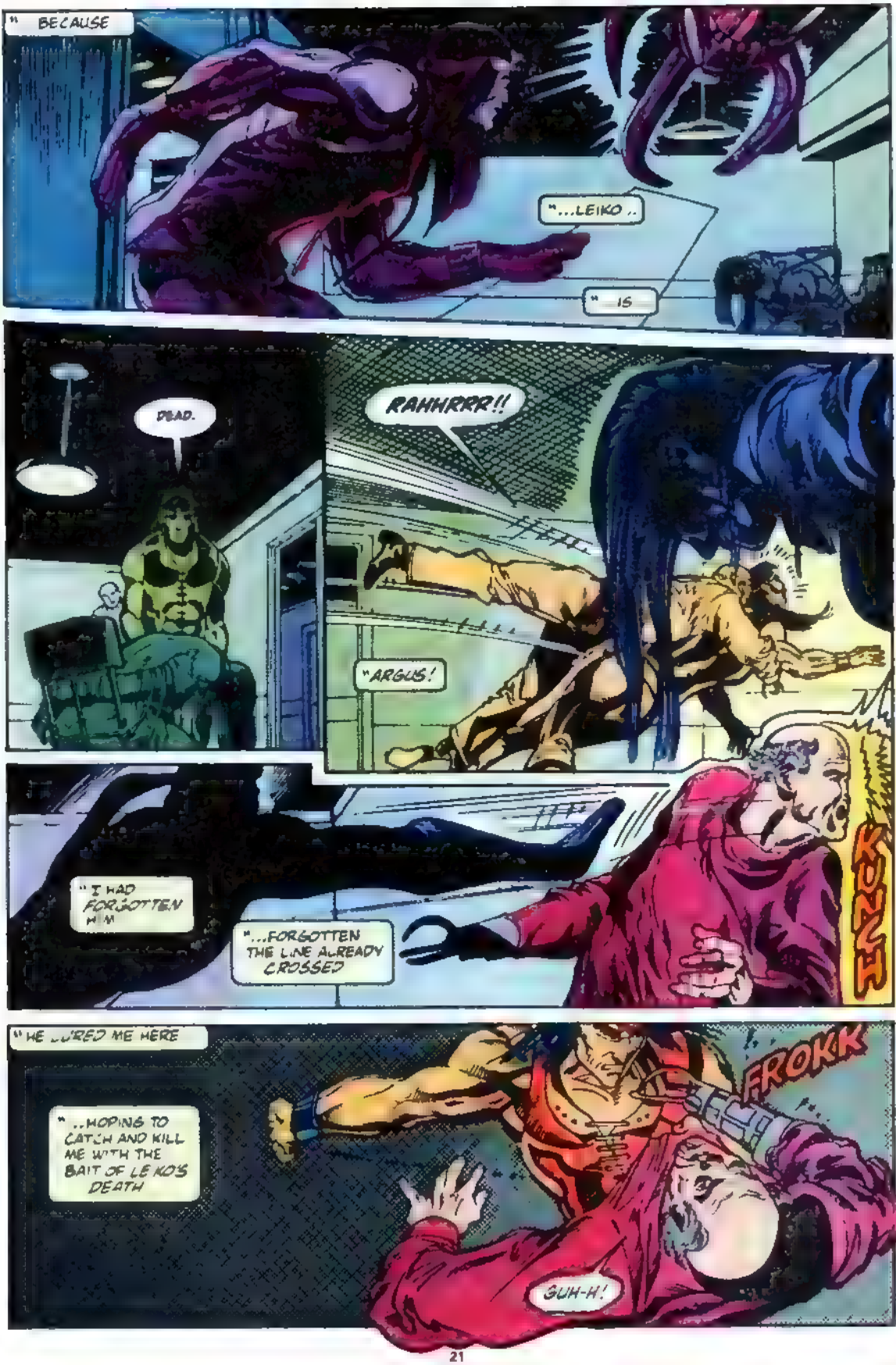
CASAGATA
WHO ARE YOU ?
WHERE ARE WE GOING ? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME ?
I'M SAVING. SHES PIXIE
WE'RE TAKIN YA TO CHURCH NYUK NYUK
YOU GET TO BE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
TONIGHT ! TONIGHT I WILL JOIN WITH CHAOS, AS THE MASTER HAS COMMANDED !
AND FROM THAT UNION, THAT LOVING HATE, THAT FEVERISH DISPASSION--
--HIS KINGDOM SHALL BE BROUGHT FORTH ON EARTH !
TONIGHT WE ENTER THE REALM OF THE ETERNAL...!
SHOOM!
TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

"LEIKO ...IS ...DEAD?
SOME LAYOUT ON THIS ISLAND, TARR--PERFECT FOR ARGLS'S TERRORIST BASE
YEAH...BUT I WONDER IF THE CHINAMAN AN' CAT GOT INSIDE...
GRAB SOME HEAT, RESTON--
-- AN' LET'S FIND OUT.
BRRRT
BRRRT
PLACE IS CRAWLIN' WITH THESE MURDEROUS SWINE...
HOPE THE SARDINIAN OFF C A'S TOOK OUR MESSAGE SERIOUSLY
BRRRT
BRRRT
AMEN.
"AND THE WORLD HAS... DARKENED.
MASTER OF KUNG FU!
CROSSING LINES
VIII KILLS
NOW, SHANG-CHI... YOU WANNA ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS--?
OR YOU WANNA JOIN YOUR GIRLFRIEND -- THE FAST WAY?
"LEIKO...IS... DEAD.

"MY MIND... SPINS.
WHAT'S GOING ON OUTSIDE?!
"I CAN ONLY GLARE AT THIS MAN... AT THIS MURDERER WHO HAS FOREVER DARKENED MY WORLD.
ANSWER ME! WHO'S ATTACKING THIS ISLAND?!
HOW MANY IN THE ASSAULT TEAM AND WHERE--
AT LAST COUNT, ARGUS, THERE WAS TWO OF US--
--RIGHT HERE!
NYAARRRH!
BRAM
"IN THIS NEW DARKNESS, HIS GUN MEANS NOTHING.
"I NO LONGER FEAR BULLETS
"TO REACH ARGUS, I WOULD WADE INTO THEM, LETTING EACH ONE BURN THROUGH MY HEART...
BRAM BRAM BRAM BRAM BRAM
GET BACK, CHINAMAN, YA BLOODY DJIT.
"... BUT I DO NOT GET THE CHANCE
KLIK KLIK
NO--!
"AND FOR ONLY THE SECOND TIME IN MY VIOLENT LIFE--
PAFF
"--I WISH TO KILL.


"ONCE, THE DESIRE TO KILL WAS AN INVIOLABLE LINE DIVIDING THE CIRCLE OF MY MIND AND SPIRIT.
"IT TOOK MY FATHER A LIFETIME TO MAKE ME CROSS THAT LINE.
MORE TERRORISTS, RESTON!
GET HIM, CHI! WE'LL HOLD OFF THE GOONS!
ERRRT!
"THIS MAN HAS DONE IT IN DAYS
BACK OFF, SHANG-CHI! THE STUFF IN THIS FLASK IS LETHAL!
--YOU WILL DIE-- EVENTUALLY!
IT ATTACKS THE BLOODSTREAM THROUGH THE PORES! MANNHEIM SAYS IT MIGHT TAKE MONTHS, BUT IF IT TOUCHES YOUR SKIN--
THEN IT IS NOTHING MORE THAN A SLOW BULLET, ARGUS... AND LEIKO... IS... DEAD.
P-GUEH
ZAK
BRAM
YOU HEAR THAT, TARR? HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF CHEMICAL WEAPON IN THERE!
YEAH--BUT THE CHINAMAN'S REFLEXES ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO--
FREEZE!
BE-ON
BRAM
(WHAT THE--?! HIM?!)
SHOOT HIM, HASHIOKA!
JH-ON.

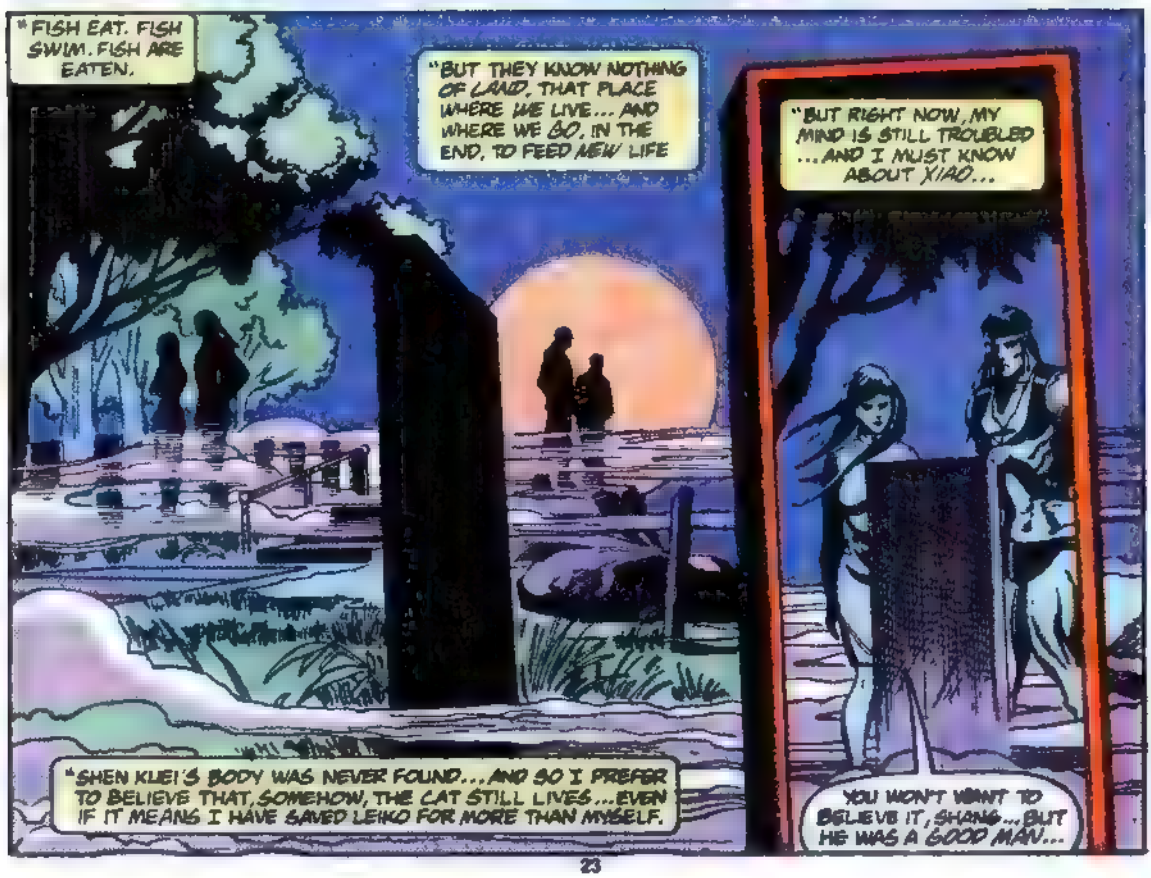
(BUT... HE'S THE ONE FROM TOKYO... WHO SOLD ME THE WEAPONS!
"CAT WAS RIGHT...
JUST SHOOT HIM!!
"HASHIOKA WILL NOT ENJOY THE REWARDS OF TERROR AND MURDER...
SHAKK
(THAT FLASK, ARGUS! WHAT ARE YOU--?)
STUPID IDIOTS!
YOU ASKED FOR IT--BOTH OF YOU!
BUKSH
"IT FEELS ONLY LIKE... WATER.
OH, NO... AND I TOLD HIM I COULD GET "HIT BY A TRUCK"...
(NO!!)
(WE ARE DEAD! WE ARE BOTH DEAD.)
"BONES BREAK UNDER MY HAND
KARUMKK
"I FEEL NOTHING.
YOU'RE CRAZY-- NOT HUMAN!
YOU'RE DEAD-- AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW IT!
"HE IS WRONG.
"I DO KNOW IT--BUT I DO NOT CARE...


" BECAUSE
"...LEIKO ..
" IS
DEAD.
RAHHRRR!!
"ARGUS!
KUNK
"I HAD FORGOTTEN HIM
"...FORGOTTEN THE LINE ALREADY CROSSED
"HE LURED ME HERE
"...HOPING TO CATCH AND KILL ME WITH THE BAIT OF LEIKO'S DEATH
FROKK
GUH-H!

"I RIP OFF HIS HOOKS--
PRRRRRREPT
CHUD
"--EVEN AS I STRIKE
"AND THEN..
CHAT
STOP IT, CHINAMAN!
IT'S OVER! HE'S OUT!!
"...I BEAT HIM.
SHWAK
HWAK
WAK
WAK
WAK
WAK
SH-SHANG
:HHHHH:
LEIKO?
YOU .C-CAME FOR ME SHANG KNEW IT .. KNEW YOU .. W-WOULD COME...
"LEIKO...IS..
"...ALIVE

"OUTSIDE, IT IS CLEAR THAT TARR'S MESSAGE WAS TAKEN SERIOUSLY...AS SARDINIAN AUTHORITIES GATHER TERRORISTS OF A DOZEN DIFFERENT STRIPES.
MP
"ARGUS AND HIS MAD DREAM ARE BOTH BROKEN.

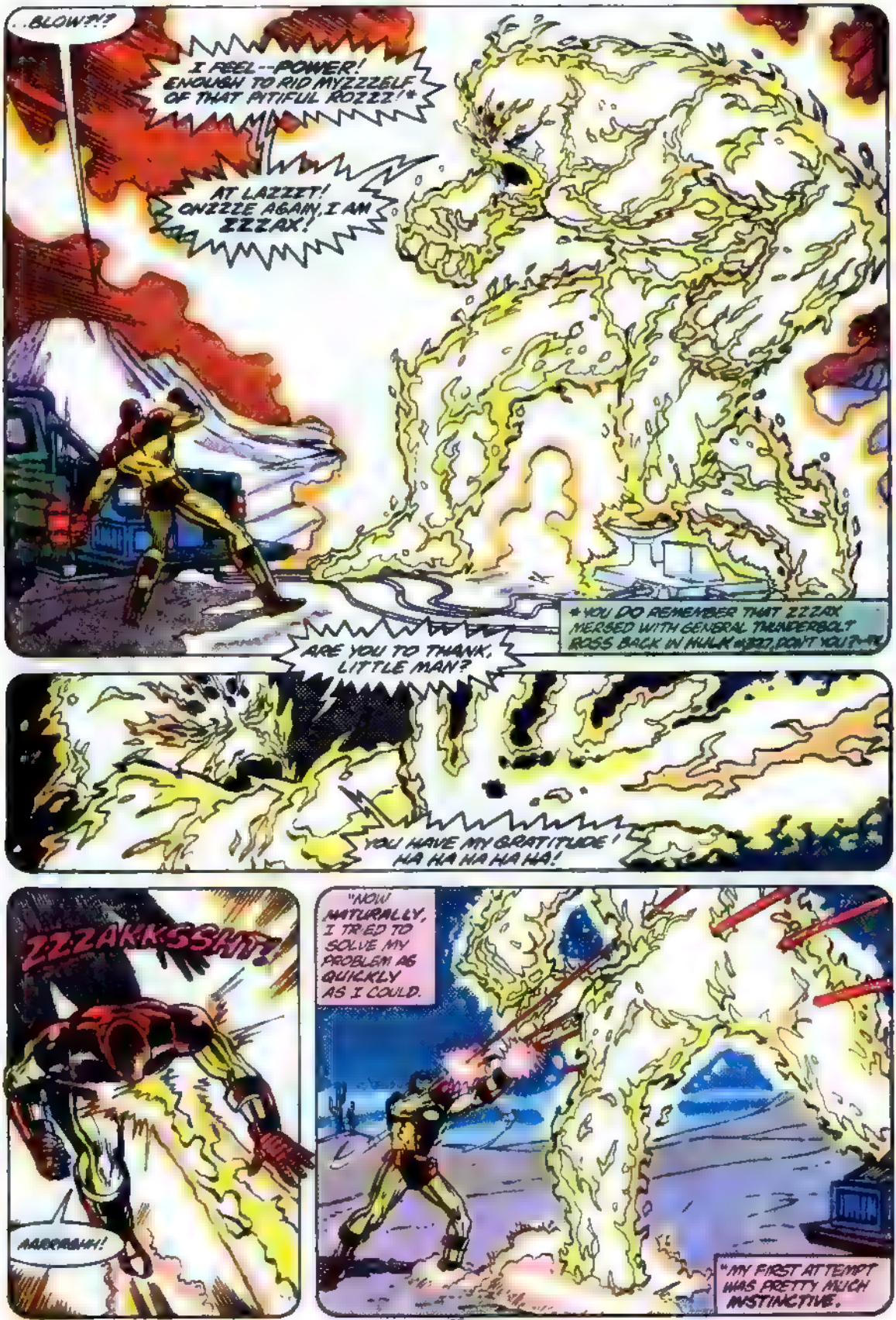
"WE ARE TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL IN ROME, WHERE SECURITY HAS BEEN INCREASED FOR THE NATO CONFERENCE
"NEVERTHELESS I DO NOT LEAVE LEIKO'S SIDE THE WHOLE TIME ..NOT EVEN WHEN THEY WISH TO DRAW A SAMPLE OF BLOOD FROM MY LEFT ARM
"THREE DAYS LATER, THROUGH A DARK SKY, WE RETURN TO HONG KONG.


"FISH EAT. FISH SWIM. FISH ARE EATEN.
"BUT THEY KNOW NOTHING OF LAND, THAT PLACE WHERE WE LIVE... AND WHERE WE GO, IN THE END, TO FEED NEW LIFE
"BUT RIGHT NOW, MY MIND IS STILL TROUBLED ...AND I MUST KNOW ABOUT XIAO...
"SHEN KUEI'S BODY WAS NEVER FOUND...AND SO I PREFER TO BELIEVE THAT, SOMEHOW, THE CAT STILL LIVES...EVEN IF IT MEANS I HAVE SAVED LEIKO FOR MORE THAN MYSELF.
YOU WON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, SHANG...BUT HE WAS A GOOD MAN...

THIS RING HE GAVE YOU, LEIKO ... AND WHICH YOU ACCEPTED AND WORE ON YOUR HAND... DOES IT MEAN THAT YOU--
LOVED HIM?
NO, SHANG
IT BELONGED TO HIS WIFE...BEFORE SHE WAS KILLED BY TERRORISTS.
GIVING IT TO ME WAS XIAO'S SYMBOL OF ATONEMENT... AND OF A NEW BEGINNING AFTER HIS CHANGE IN HEART...
BEFORE HE CAME TO US, YOU SEE...XIAO HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE RED WOLVES.
ONLY I KNEW OF THIS... AND I NEVER EVEN TOLD BLACK JACK OR CLIVE... LET THEM THINK WE WERE LOVERS...SO I COULD HELP XIAO CHANGE...AND BECOME STRONG ENOUGH TO DO WHAT HE WANTED...
BUT HE... NEVER GOT THE CHANCE.
"LEAVING THE RING ON XIAO'S GRAVE SHE RISES ...TO EMBRACE ME.
HOW LONG YOU THINK HE'LL LAST, TARR?
KNOWIN' HIM, RESTON, I'M TEMPTED TO SAY FOREVER...
...BUT AFTER THE RESULTS OF THAT BLOOD TEST... ANYWHERE FROM A WEEK TO NO MORE'N A YEAR.
I KNOW HOW WU FEELS...BUT I HOPE THATCHER AN' ALL THE OTHER BLOODY FOOL HEADS O' THE WESTERN WORLD APPRECIATE IT.
KOFF KOFF
PHTOOH
"LEIKO...IS... A...VE.
CHI WAS RIGHT --WHO NEEDS THESE LOUSY CIGS?
"THE RULES HAVE CHANGED .BUT EVEN AS I SLOWLY DIE...
"...NEVER HAVE I FELT LIFE SO FULLY."
THE End.

HI.
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETING 7:30
MY NAME'S TONY.
HI, TONY.
AND I'M AN ALCOHOLIC.
IRON MAN
IN
One Day at a Time

I WANTED TO SPEAK TONIGHT BECAUSE I CAME TO ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS LOOKING FOR HELP WITH MY DRINKING PROBLEM.
I FOUND IT, BUT I FOUND THAT AA HELPED ME IN OTHER WAYS, TOO.
"FOR INSTANCE TAKE SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED AT WORK RECENTLY—I WAS IN THE FINAL STAGES OF A NEW PROJECT...
OKAY, EVERYTHING'S CONNECTED PROPERLY AND THERE'S NO ONE AROUND FOR MILES
NOW TO SEE IF THIS GENERATOR REALLY WILL DRAW STATIC ELECTRICITY FROM THE AIR...
OR IF IT'LL JUST BLOW UP IN MY FACE
TEK
KOR
KLI!
BLUE BLAZZZZZ!
ZZZZOMETHING'S TUGGING AT ME!
PULLING ME TO EARTH!
WHAT--?! THERE'S TOO MUCH POWER! THE READINGS ARE GOING OFF THE DIAL!
DZZZZZ
THE GENERATOR CAN'T STAND THE STRAIN! IT'S GOING TO—
DZZZZZ


..BLOW?!?
I FEEL--POWER! ENOUGH TO RID MYZZZELF OF THAT PITIFUL ROZZZ!*
AT LAZZZT! ONZZZE AGAIN, I AM ZZZAX!
* YOU DO REMEMBER THAT ZZZAX MERSED WITH GENERAL THUNDERBOLT ROSS BACK IN HULK #327, DON'T YOU?--TK
ARE YOU TO THANK, LITTLE MAN?
YOU HAVE MY GRATITUDE! HA HA HA HA HA!
ZZZAKKSSHT!
AAAKKKHH!
"NOW NATURALLY, I TRIED TO SOLVE MY PROBLEM AS QUICKLY AS I COULD.
"MY FIRST ATTEMPT WAS PRETTY MUCH INSTINCTIVE.

FZAP
FZAP
FZAP
"IT DIDN'T DO MUCH GOOD.
"SO I TRIED A DELAYING TACTIC--SORT OF AN INTERIM MEASURE.
WHAT?! MORE IRON MEN?!
NO MATTER! ZZZAX WILL DESTROY YOU ALL!
FWOOSH
HMM.. HE MIGHT, AT THAT
BUT HOPEFULLY THOSE HOLOGRAMS WILL BUY ME ENOUGH TIME TO FIGURE OUT A REAL SOLUTION!
HOW DO YOU FIGHT A MONSTER MADE OF PURE ENERGY?
"ENERGY!" OF COURSE!
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS DRAIN HIS ENERGY INTO MY ARMOR'S POWER PODS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
ASSUMING THEY CAN TAKE THE STRAIN, THAT IS
WHEW
"AT THAT POINT, I THOUGHT I HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL.

"I WAS WRONG.
WHAT--? MY ARMOR--
IT'S ZZZAX--TRYING TO TAKE CONTROL!
HE'S TOO STRONG--
--ONLY ONE CHANCE!
TIK
KLIK
GOT TO EXPEL ALL OF THE POWER FROM MY ARMOR!
SHRAKOOM!
POOR LITTLE HUMAN! IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO KILL YOU NOW!
BUT I HAVE HAD MY FUN!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
THUD!

NOW I MUZZT IZEEK MORE POWER! HA HA HA HA HA!
"I HAD REALLY BLOWN IT. FIRST, I CREATED A HUGE PROBLEM. THEN, BY TRYING TO FIX IT, I ONLY MADE IT WORSE.
"A FEW MONTHS AGO, I WOULD HAVE WASTED TIME DWELLING ON MY MISTAKES AND FEELING SORRY FOR MYSELF.
"BY THE TIME I'D HAVE DONE ANYTHING, IT WOULD'VE BEEN TOO LATE.
"BUT AA TEACHES YOU NOT TO DWELL ON WHAT YOU'VE DONE WRONG.
IF I CAN DIVERT... MY EMERGENCY POWER... FROM LIFE SUPPORT TO... MOTOR SYSTEMS...
"YOU ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR MISTAKES--
...IT'LL EITHER KILL ME...
TOK
"--YOU LEARN FROM THEM--
...OR...
"--AND YOU MOVE ON.
...IT'LL GET ME... AS FAR AS THE GENERATOR.
THERE!
BZZZZZZ
AHHH...

ALL RIGHT, BACK TO BUSINESS.
LET'S TRY A NEW APPROACH THIS TIME.
SOME CABLE, A LITTLE LIQUID NITROGEN...
...AND WE'RE OFF TO TAME A MONSTER!
YOU? AGAIN?!
YOUR PERZZIZZTENZZE HAZZZ ZZEAZZED TO BE AMUZZZING!
WELL, IF IT HASN'T, IT WILL IN A MINUTE!
BAH! DO YOU THINK ZZZAX IZZ ZZOME BOLT OF LIGHTNING TO BE TRAPPED IN A HUNK OF METAL?

MAYBE NOT ORDINARILY! BUT IF I SPRAY THE CABLE WITH SOME LIQUID NITROGEN--
--AND INCREASE ITS CONDUCTIVITY, LIKE SO--
NNOOO!
--IT SHOULD SUCK YOU IN LONG ENOUGH--
--TO CROSS THE CABLE AND--
SHRAKT!
--NNGH!-- SHORT CIRCUIT YOU FOR GOOD!
SO IN THE END, I MANAGED TO FIX MY PROBLEM. YES, I'D SCREWED UP, BUT I DIDN'T LET THAT STOP ME.
I GUESS I'M SAYING "THANK YOU." YOUR SUPPORT AND LOVE HAVE HELPED ME -- NOT JUST WITH MY DRINKING PROBLEM -- BUT WITH MY OTHER PROBLEMS AS WELL.
AT LAST, I SEE THAT I CAN TACKLE ALL MY PROBLEMS THE SAME WAY--
--ONE DAY AT A TIME.
END

This story is dedicated with love to someone who doesn't need to be told why.

IRON MAN
MASTER OF KUNG FU